

**Remarks of JoelPatrick Leger  
Third year social studies teacher  
Southington Public Schools**

**Before the Program Review and Investigations Committee  
On Senate Bill 108  
AAC the Creation of an Educator Professional Standards Board Task Force**

**March 13, 2012**

Good afternoon, Senator Fonfara and Representative Rowe, and members of the Program Review and Investigations Committee.

My name is JoelPatrick Leger, and I'm a social studies teacher in Southington. I am here today to comment on Senate Bill 108 that would create a task force to design an educator professional standards board in CT.

Many new teachers bring unique skills and experiences into their new profession. As a soldier in the United States Army I served as an aircrew member and mechanic on a Blackhawk helicopter. In this demanding job we strove to ensure that every single person exemplified the highest standards of professionalism and excellence. I took this responsibility very seriously. Not only did the performance of every individual reflect the competence and professionalism of the whole, but we also put our lives in each others' hands every day.

After leaving the Army I became a student at Central Connecticut State University. Because I had set and lived up to high standards as a member of an Army community, I sought out ways to improve my new community at CCSU, and did so first as a student leader in the Veterans Appreciation Organization. Later in the Education Club I had the opportunity to work with future teachers at the local and state level who were striving to enhance their preparation for their profession. When the action of other student organizations brought negative attention from the national media and damaged the perception of the students in our community, I worked with other student leaders to create a code of conduct for student organizations, to ensure that all members who represented our community were held to higher standards.

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As a teacher I have volunteered to serve on district and state level committees and commissions so that I can play an active role in shaping my profession. This is the attitude many new professionals bring to the teaching profession – a desire to play an active role in shaping our profession, as it motivates us to live up to the standards we ourselves set.

I believe that teachers deserve the right to set and maintain the standards for their profession. I believe that given the opportunity, a teacher standards board will help to increase the caliber of teachers in the profession and will motivate teachers as they feel empowered to strive for excellence.

Should a standards board come to fruition in the near future, today's young professionals will be more motivated to consider teaching as a career, and remain in the profession, because they themselves will have a more meaningful role in shaping it. I'm hopeful that this year's legislature will take the first bold step toward an educator professional standards board in CT by supporting Senate Bill 108 and creating the task force.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective as a young professional committed to the teaching profession.